

Traffic Related Comments Regarding the 40B Project at 55 Summer Street:

I first wanted to thank you for letting me speak at tonight's hearing. I have already written to the ZBA, expressing my other concerns and wanted to use this time to elaborate on traffic in South Walpole.

I have lived in this community since 1993. Over the years, traffic has increased and at times, come to a complete halt. I believe there is value in listening and factoring in resident feedback compared to simply using information from a 2 day Traffic Impact Study. We live and drive locally here. 24/7.

Let me share some factors relating to traffic safety study that Mr. Cram didn't take into account: (and what residents deal with even without factoring in the 40B Development):

➤ **Boyden School pick up time:**

- For whatever reason(s), parents choose to pick up their child(ren) at the end of the school day. This car after car queue starts at the school and spills out into Washington Street and sometimes to Water Street. This creates no way for traffic to pass. The rural nature of these roads in South Walpole are narrow.
- When the Preserve was built (another 300 unit 40B) closeby, those children were added to Boyden School. Now there are even more parents picking up their children.
- Mr. Cram's traffic impact study excluded this busy time. I wonder if the parents who will reside at Cedar Edge/crossing are going to feel comfortable allowing their young children to walk on their own to/from Boyden. This would mean crossing the train tracks at a busy time. OR will some parents in that 300 unit development choose to pick them up when school ends. I can only imagine the increased horror when Boyden runs on the late start/late pick up years, combining this gridlock with commuters returning home from work.

➤ **The Non-Stop Commuter Train/ Fairmont Line:**

- During the pilot project, the number of trains crossing Summer Street increased. As a resident, let me tell you what actually happens when the train gates come down, stopping the vehicles there.
- Cars travelling from route 1 onto Water Street get backed up. This creates a very unsafe gridlock as these cars block the intersection at Washington Street. Members of my family frequently travel to that intersection several times a day. With the goal of visiting the Country Store or getting gas. Taking that left onto Water Street is very risky as drivers can't get a clear view of oncoming traffic (in either direction) when cars are bumper to bumper on Water Street, waiting for the gates to rise. Mr. Cram would like us to believe this "wait period" is non-significant. But it **is** significant! Cars don't begin to flow freely once the gates rise, there is a trickle effect since each backed up vehicle must halt once they get to the STOP sign in order to take a left onto Summer Street. Accidents have occurred at this traffic triangle and will continue to be more frequent when you add cars from residents at Cedar's Edge. Let's use a conservative number and say each resident owns only one vehicle. THAT'S 300 CARS ADDED TO THIS ALREADY BUSY TRIANGLE.
- Even though the pilot program has recently ceased due to low ridership during Covid, the pandemic won't last forever and trains will be speeding by once again.
- Just for the record, I'm not sure how emergency vehicles such as firetrucks or ambulances will be impacted when faced with these gridlock moments. The roads are narrow. How will they safely pass the queue then wait for the gates to rise again when entering or exiting Cedar Edge? This is a huge safety issue.

➤ **Gillette Stadium Events:**

- Everyone in this neighborhood knows the challenge when driving in South Walpole during these events. It is simply chaotic. I am unable to take a right out of my street (Georgia Drive)-off Washington St. as traffic builds up. David Hale was not willing to even factor in the impact of 300 units in this area saying we should take this up with Robert Kraft. I find it unconscionable how Mr. Hale fails to acknowledge the devastating impact 300 units would bring to this already treacherous time. We can't do anything about the stadium but

this developer could scale back the project to something that blends better with south Walpole without creating further traffic gridlock for the residents here.

➤ **Commuting:**

- Mr. Cram said 55% of residents from this development will use route one during morning and evening commuting times. I beg to differ as many more cars use navigation apps to view traffic conditions on route one and will choose to travel parallel on Washington Street. Let's face it, there are less traffic lights to contend with on Washington Street.
- Getting out of Georgia Drive during commuting times is a safety issue as Washington Street slopes upward creating a Hill effect where oncoming cars cannot be seen when they are traveling north. I can only imagine how this development will only increase the chance of a serious accident here. Again, how would safety vehicles pass through these neighborhoods on rural, narrow streets when all of these above factors combine and play out?

I am not talking about being inconvenienced but rather the seriousness of increased accidents occurring as a result of allowing this project to move forward. This will be the perfect storm if allowed to move forward as is

This would be so much more acceptable and agreeable if it was scaled back to a smaller development or to remove the two SIX-STORY buildings at the very least.

Final Note:

Do we even know the traffic route excavating trucks will be using while constructing this project?

Thank you,

Lori Swafford-Falter

Georgia Drive, Walpole